

# THE CORRESPONDENT.

MAGNA EST VERITAS ET PREVALEBIT.

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VOL. 3.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

“LIBELS,”

*Or the Christian art of suppressing the TRUTH, in Law, in Morality, and in Religion.*

MR. EDITOR—Having recently seen an article from the Editor of the Statesman, lamenting the deplorable condition of the people of Old England, under their infamous laws on libels; according to which, the TRUTH of the matter published, is no defence or justification for the virtuous mortal, who has been prompted by a love for truth, or by the purest benevolence, to expose notorious scoundrels, in order to warn others from falling a prey to such harpies.

Another part of this damnable and vilest of all laws is, that *the greater the truth* the greater is the libel; and the higher the officer, the higher is the offence committed against him.

This is the law of a Christian land, of a Christian nation, and of Christian priests! And yet was invented by the vilest of villains, and for the sole purpose of protecting the greatest villains in their vilest villainies.

Happy, thrice happy, are the people of the Northern States, who demolished that temple of iniquity, immediately after our revolution and separation from that modern “whore of Babylon;” and who ever since, have made TRUTH the polar star of all their legislation.

But it is not so with the South; for there, truth is still banished from the land, and in Virginia, the old infernal English laws on libels are in full force, and in their broadest latitude too! Yes, Sir! It is the law of Virginia; a Christian State; one who even *legislates in favor of Christianity*; and who boasts more than all the rest, of her enlightened statesmen and enlightened laws! But when the “blind lead,” the leaders as well as the followers, are sure to fall into such a “ditch” as Virginia is now in. Even Hercules himself cannot lift their state wagon out of that mire into which they are now stuck fast. But a “Convention” may. While such abominable laws are in force, you may know of a dozen Bishops or Archbishops, who keep mistresses, and attend horse-races; but you dare not publish such outrages against morality and religion to the world. Or you may know of hundreds of gambling hypocritical priests, who get drunk, ride at fox-hunts, and cuckold some of their deluded hearers; but you must not publish such facts, or expose such scoundrels to the nation. Or you may know of governors or legislators, who are hypocrites in religion, and void of honor in morality; but you must not publish any such facts to their constituents. Or you

may know of men who pilfer your treasury ; but you must not publish any such defalcation to the people who pay the taxes. Or you may know of Justices, who have declared before a trial came before them, how they would decide on such a trial ; but you must not publish such things to the people. Or you may know of some district attorneys, who have struck other attorneys in the presence of all the court, for the want of more forcible arguments ; but you must not publish such disgraceful acts to the people. Or you may know of some young attorneys, who have struck old grey haired and crippled gentlemen, but you must not publish such things to the world. Or you may know of some young district attorneys, who, in order to keep up some appearance of courage, challenge all the old grey haired gentleman, who refuse to believe every thing they say ; but you must not let the public know them. Or you may know of some attorneys who have confessed that they procured some convictions by "*fraud and collusion* ;" but you must not publish such acts, even for the public good. Or you may know of men who declared previously to certain trials, that they were too much interested in certain suits, even to be a witness ; and yet had the modesty to come forward, when such trials were likely to go against their friend from the want of their testimony, and swear that they had no interest whatever in the same suits ; but you must not publish such facts to the world. Or you may know of some attorneys whose maxim is, that every thing is *lawful* which is not forbidden by our laws ; which of course includes lying, deceit, and other trifles of that kind ; and yet profess to be Christians, and boast of their belief in "*revelation*" and "*inspiration* ;" nay, presume to stigmatize as "*Infidels*," men of the purest honor, who have never been guilty of falsehood or deceit ; but you must not publish these things to the people. Or you may know of some men who have sworn falsely ; but you must not guard the community against men more dangerous than the highway robber, by publishing them. Or you may know of men who pilfer the mail ; but you must not publish them. Or you may know of men who have seduced, or attempted to seduce, the wives or daughters of others ; but you must not expose them by making them public. Or you may know of men who have intercourse with negro women ; but you must not publish it to the world. Or if you know of any persons who have actually been convicted of any of these peca-dillos before any court, you dare not publish the proceedings of any such courts !

Thus, you see, all the great Christian villains in Virginia, are as much protected by their law on libels, as all their great Christian brother scoundrels are in Great Britain. And what a damnable mixture of law, morality, and religion, must such a state of things produce in both countries !

When will Virginia begin to *advance* in her march towards the improvement of the human race ? for her *whites* are almost as great slaves as her *blacks* ; and she has retrograded a century at least, in her morals and religion, as well as legislation. She is now nearly as low as New-England was formerly, under her "*witches*" and "*Blue laws* ;" and as her cup of degradation is nearly full, we may soon hope to see some change for the better. And that the time is not far distant, when all

her laws on libels will be abolished, and the true law prevail; which is, that every officer or citizen, should lead such a virtuous life as to *challenge* the truth, instead of suppressing it.

C. SHULTZ.

Virginia.

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*To the Editor of the National Gazette, Philadelphia..*

SIR—Your paper contains such frequent panegyrics on the Christian religion, its divine origin, its absolute necessity to society and government, and so many vituperations against infidels, and their writings, that it is no wonder you are in high favor with the parsons, and all the orthodox old women, (male and female) of your city. You seem to place yourself at the head of the light armed troops, the guerilla warfare against heresy and infidelity. Your paragraphs exhibit your zeal, if not your prowess; and show your adherence to the holy alliance between Church and State, and your pious hatred to all its opponents. I will not do you injustice by attributing all this exhibition of zeal without knowledge to popularity-hunting—to the success of your paper requiring this stage play. I will not do this, suspicious as appearances may be; because, from what I have heard of your character, I am disposed to consider you as a well meaning and honest man; better fitted, indeed, for skirmishing in paragraphs, than for any serious discussion, requiring learned or laborious research; but sincerely expressing your real convictions. It is in this last and respectable character that I have taken the liberty of addressing you; and request that you would save, if you can, your favorite Bible, from the disgraceful charges that now, for the hundredth time, have been brought against it; without the semblance of a reply or an apology, from its innumerable host of salaried advocates. In good truth, these Swiss troops who fight for pay, are not to be relied upon in time of danger. *Non defensoribus istis, tempus egit.* The spirit truly is willing, but the head is weak. You will absolve us, however, from any impropriety in defending ourselves against your orthodox accusations, even though we should carry the war into the enemy's quarters.

In your paper of Thursday, April 10th, 1828, I find an extract from a letter of some priest or other, more weak than wise, who signs himself X.; and which your good wishes to the good cause, has induced you to adopt and insert. It commences thus: "*No nation will be either prosperous or happy, which conforms not its laws to the spirit of that system of MORAL PRECEPTS which the God of nature gave to the Jews, and which pervades with exquisite harmony the whole of the Old and New Testament.*"

Now Sir, as your orthodox correspondent has written, and you in your wisdom have adopted this pious passage, you will not, I hope, complain, if those who dissent from your opinion should take the liberty of examining it, as I shall do. These vague and sweeping assertions by men who are paid for making them, and who live by the imposture they profess, can derive no support from authority: the question then is, as to the *moral precepts* which with such exquisite harmony pervade these books. How can we ascertain them but by referring to the books themselves? I have done so, with the aid of the second volume of the *Cor-*

*respondent*, p. 269, as the ground work of the first of three letters which I propose to address to you, viz :

1. Proofs of the filthiness and obscenity that pervade the Old Testament.

2. Proofs of the cruelty, the revengeful spirit, the fraud, robbery, and falsehood, imputed in that book to God himself, and to his avowed favorites ; by precept, by example, or both.

I grant all this has been repeatedly and abundantly shown ; but the hired advocates of Christianity suppress, and never notice the objections so strongly and repeatedly made to it. They treat it as if it stood like the axioms of mathematics, perfectly free from all possible objection ! This is not very fair conduct ; but it is consistent with the fraudulent cunning of the whole class of Christian teachers. Hence, we have again and again to hold up in strong characters before the eyes of these blind leaders of the blind, the objections which they are determined not to see. Here, then, thou pious Editor, and thou pious assessor of silly falsehoods, the Rev. Mr. X., whoever you may be—here ; look at this black catalogue ; reply to it if ye can ; and prepare yourselves for the two next specimens of scripture morality, which I mean to offer for your consideration. In the mean time, I thank ye for the opportunity ye have afforded of bringing forward this infidel defence ; for surely, if we are attacked, we have a right not merely to defend, but to recriminate. In future, it will be our duty to defend ourselves by carrying the war into the enemy's quarters.

#### SPECIMENS OF FILTHINESS AND OBSCENITY.

The story of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar. Genesis xvi. 1—16.

The account of Lot and his guests at Sodom. xix. 1—18.

The amours of Lot's daughters with their father. xix. 30—38.

The bargains of Rachel and Leah. xxx. 1—35.

Catamenia. xxxi. 35.

The ravishing of Dinah, &c. &c. xxxiv. 1—31.

Reuben and Bilhan. xxxv. 22.

Onan, Judah and Tamar. xxxviii. 8—30.

Potiphar's wife and Joseph. xxxix. 7—18.

Cases of uncleanness described. Leviticus xv. 15—33.

Prohibition of sexual intercourse. xviii. 1—30.

Bestiality. xx. 1—27.

Whoredom of the Israelites. Numbers xxv. 1—8.

Female captives ; cruelty towards them. xxxi. 17—35.

Tokens of virginity. Deuteronomy xxii. 13—30.

Assault by a woman. xxv. 11.

Circumcision. Joshua v. 1—8.

Sodomy and lust. Judges xix. 22—29.

Ravishment. xxi. 1—25.

Adultery and murder ; Abigail and Nabal. 1 Samuel xxv. 1—44.

David, Bathsheba, and Uriah. 2 Sam. xi.

Amnon and Tamar. xiii. 10—15.

Absalom with David's concubines. xvi. 22.

Solomon's 700 wives and 300 concubines. 1 Kings xi. 1.

Him that pisseth against a wall. 2 Kings ix. 8.



Grind unto another. Job xxxi. 9—10.

The Song of Songs, which is Solomon's. i. to viii. throughout.

Immodesty. Isaiah iii. 17. xlvii. 1—3.

Nastiness. Ezekiel iv. 13, &c.

The same—very bad. xvi. throughout.

The same. xxii. throughout.

The same—very bad. xxiii. throughout.

The same. Hosea i. 1—6.

The same. iii. 1—3.

There might be some additions to this horrible list; but here is quite enough to show the character of these books, which a lying and fraudulent priesthood have the daring impudence to ascribe *verbatim et literatim*, to the immediate dictation and inspiration of the Deity! No instance of blasphemy can be adduced equal to this. No specimens of language too filthy for the most vulgar brothel, can be shown as employed in any other religion. The pagans were obscene; but this is beyond mere obscenity. No wonder that brothels for peduasty were built all around the temple at Jerusalem, and that, (using the words of St. Jerome) *pueris alienis adhæserunt*. Jerome on 2 Is. Boxius de sig. eccles. L. 7, ch. 4. Gaspar sanctius, ib. 4. 12. These Jewish practices were in "exquisite harmony" with the style of their own books.

I appeal to the Editor of the National Gazette—I appeal to his Rev. correspondent, X.—I appeal to any decent and well meaning reader of these pages—I ask of them, and each of them;—would you for any inducement under heaven, read aloud the passages I have referred to, to your family? Would you dare to violate the chaste ears, or contaminate the virgin purity of mind of a young female, by reading to her these abominable expressions and descriptions? I solemnly declare, I should shudder to myself to copy at full length the citations to which I have in this letter obscurely referred. How then can the book which contains them, be honestly recommended as favorable to decency and morality? What are we to think of the class of teachers, who solemnly proclaim the book which contains these detestable passages, to be the *word of God*? Aye, the *inspired* word of God! And who maintain themselves in comparative idleness and luxury, by maintaining the divine character of this strange collection!

There is hardly a family in the United States who does not possess a copy of the Bible. My assertions therefore concerning this book, and the passages referred to, can be verified or confuted at any moment. Deception is out of the question. To the Bible therefore I appeal; to the Law and to the Testimony. Let our adversaries do the same; and let us hear what defence they can make for facts impossible to be denied. Let those who will take the trouble of reading these passages, say when they have done so, whether the epithets I have applied to them are not deserved. What inducement can a plain man like myself, who has no interest whatever to gratify in this question but the interest of truth, and decency, and morality—what interest can such a man have to complain of the religion of his country without cause? What am I to gain by it? Surely neither profit or honor. You pay none of your contributors, and you know not who I am. Nor have I any ambition

to be known ; for so soon as I am known, so soon and so surely the rancorous hatred of an offended priesthood, with all the bad and merciless passions that avarice and ambition can stir up, will be employed to my injury ; nor shall I have any protection but my own insignificance.

On the contrary, is not the interest of the clergy pledged to the truth of the falsehoods by which they subsist ? Have they not a strong and manifest motive and interest to carry on the deception ? Think of the tribute they raise on public credulity in this city of New-York alone.

The Roman Catholic church, well knowing in how many ways this bible book is calculated to contaminate mental purity, forbids the indiscriminate use of it ; and properly. But disgusting as the task is, I cannot help thinking, that every mother should read these passages, that she may judge whether the book containing them is a proper book for her children to read.

TRUTH.

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THE TRINITY.

MR. EDITOR—Is it possible that any person capable of reflection can believe that Deity is composed of a trinity of persons ? I would even ask those, who from education are attached to this doctrine, in what part of their own bible it is said, that the person whom they call the Father, is God Almighty ; that the Son is God Almighty ; and that the Spirit, or Holy Ghost is God Almighty—that there is a trinity in unity, and unity in trinity—or three persons in one God ? Facts so wonderful, and extraordinary, if true, would have been declared in the most positive manner ; and the more so, if, as it is said, they were in the least essential to man's salvation or future welfare. Would not Moses, or the writer of the books to which his name is affixed, instead of saying, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is *One Lord*," have declared in the most unequivocal manner, that the Lord, his God, was composed of *three Lords*, or *three persons* ? Would he not, when represented as prophesying of the appearance of the Messiah, have at once made known his *natures* and attributes, those of God and man in one being, instead of likening him to himself, when he is made to say, *The Lord your God shall raise up a Prophet from among your brethren, like unto me, him shall ye hear.* Would not those, who are termed the Evangelists and Apostles, if they had believed that Jesus was the *only true God*, have made it the constant subject of their Gospels and Epistles ? Would they not have made it known to the world in the plainest terms, that Jesus, *the mighty and omnipotent God*, or the second Person of the Trinity, had visited the earth in the form of a man ; or, rather, made his first appearance as a *God-infant*, born of a virgin ? Would they not have informed us, that it was the *Creator* of all things who laid in a manger with beasts ; who was *circumcised*, and who fled from the persecution of one of his creatures ? that it was the *Almighty Creator* of the universe, with whom men were so familiar, and whom they considered as their companion and equal ! that it was the maker of every good and perfect gift, who hungered and thirsted ; who was persecuted and insulted ! that it was the *all-wise* and *omnipotent God* who was tempted of the devil ; who wept over Jerusalem, and yet had not the power or inclination to save her ! that it was the *Almighty Maker* of

*Heaven and of Earth*, and all that is therein, who had not where to lay his head! that it was the *only living and true God* (Jesus Christ) who prayed to *another* only living and true God (the Father,) that the bitter cup of his wrath might pass from him! that it was the *all-glorious Supreme* who hid himself from the persecuting Jews, and who stood in need of his own angels to comfort and support him! that it was the *Almighty, Omniscient, and Everlasting God*, who was buffeted and spit upon; mocked and derided—who was betrayed by Judas, and scourged by Pilate! In short, and to bring this absurd climax to its close, would these Apostles or Evangelists have concealed from the world, or rather, would they not have stated in language that could by no individual be misunderstood, that it was the *immortal, immutable, omnipotent; the infinitely wise, and just, and good, and merciful, and benevolent God and Father of all mankind*, who was tried, condemned, and executed between two thieves, as a criminal and impostor!

Who would not prefer paganism, with all its absurdities, to the doctrine of the Trinity?—so repugnant to all the feelings of humanity, and so contradictory and inconsistent in itself.

CLIO.

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WORD OF GOD.

MR. EDITOR—When any book is introduced into the world as the word of God, and made the ground work of religion, it ought to be scrutinized more than any other book, in order to ascertain if it possess evidence of what it is called. It is not our calling a book *holy* that makes it so, any more than our calling a religion holy entitles it to that name. Inquiry, then, is necessary, in order to arrive at truth. But inquiry must have some principles to proceed on—some standard to judge by—some settled point from which to start—superior to human authority.

When we survey the revolutions of the planetary system, and the whole economy of Nature, which is no other than the laws prescribed to matter, we see, taking that economy as a whole, unerring order, and universal harmony reigning throughout. No one part interferes with the other parts. The sun does not run against the moon, nor the moon against the sun, nor the planets against each other. Every thing keeps its appointed time or place. This harmony is so obvious, that the husbandman, though he cannot calculate eclipses, is as sensible of it as the philosophical astronomer.

Here then is the standard to which every thing must be brought that pretends to be the work of God; and by this standard it must be judged, independently of any thing and every thing that man can say or do. His opinion is like a feather in the scale compared with this standard.

It is, therefore, by this standard that the bible, and all other books pretending to be the word of God, (and there are many of them in the world) must be judged, and not by the opinions of men or the decrees of ecclesiastical councils. These have been so contradictory that they have often rejected in one council what they voted to be the word of God in another, and admitted what had before been rejected. In this state of uncertainty, which is rendered still more uncertain by the numerous contradictory sectaries that have sprung up, what is man to do?

The answer is easy. Begin at the root—begin with the Bible itself. Examine it with the utmost strictness. It is our duty so to do. Compare the parts with each other, and the whole with the harmonious magnificent order that reigns throughout the visible universe; and the result will be, that if the same Almighty wisdom that created the universe, dictated also the bible, the bible will be as harmonious and as magnificent in all its parts as the universe is. But if, instead of this, the parts are found to be discordant, contradicting in one place what is said in another, abounding also in idle and obscene stories, and representing the Almighty as a passionate whimsical being, continually changing his mind, making and unmaking his own works, as if he did not know what he was about, we may hold it for certainty that the creator of the universe is not the author of such a book; that it is not the word of God; and that to call it so is to dishonor his name.

OBSERVATOR.

SUPREME INTELLIGENCE.

MR. EDITOR—From a series of cogitations which I have occasionally noted, I extract the following; and offer it in answer (if it may be considered as such) to E. M. in the *Correspondent* for 10th instant. My opinions are honest, and if erroneous, I desire to have them corrected.

When we view the infinity of worlds which perpetually revolve through the immensity of space, minutely scan the multiform operations of boundless nature, and contemplate the eternal system of universal natural phenomena, we discern all that can be positively known about a God; but when we attempt to proceed further, and endeavor to discover the existence of an original, intelligent Designer, Author, or Cause of that system, or to define something superior to Nature, we launch forth into an ocean of interminable speculation; and could we waft the fleet shallop of our imagination with the rapidity of thought through the billows of discussion for a thousand centuries, and should we survey every apparently tenable spot of argument which we might descry, we would not progress one decisive step beyond the point at which we first set out; we should continually create inexplicable chimeras, and encounter incessant turmoils of clashing opinions; and the utmost latitude of our research, would only enable us to declare, that the object of our inquiries *may be*, and *may not be*.

S. E. L.

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**NEW-YORK, SATURDAY, MAY 24, 1828.**

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*The Antidote.*—This paper, established for the avowed purpose of carrying on a perpetual warfare against the *Correspondent*, has sunk into oblivion in consequence of its own insignificance. When the first number appeared, we were led, from the boldness of its tone, to expect that its conductors were men of talents, who had entered on the contest with honorable feelings, and with a sincere desire to discover the truth. We were very soon convinced, however, that like every other paper which advocates religious opinions, the *Antidote* calculated on success only by supporting superstition, flattering the prejudices of the multitude, and calumniating every one who had the honesty and boldness to



detect and expose error. Its pages teemed with rant, rhapsody, misrepresentation, and frequently, gross falsehood. It was in vain that we pointed out these falsehoods; it was in vain that we invited the infuriated editors to a calm and dispassionate investigation of the truths which they pretended to announce: they replied by repeating their scurrility and abuse, and did not ever deign to notice charges which so deeply involved their veracity. With men of such principles, or rather, destitute of all principle, we could no longer maintain a contest. To continue to notice them, was giving them an importance of which they were unworthy, and which only served to keep alive a work that had not even ordinary talent to recommend it. Since we ceased to recognise it, we have scarcely heard the name of the *Antidote* mentioned. Nor would we have again alluded to it, had not the fact of its having once existed been brought to our recollection by the following

### OBITUARY.

"The house of the wicked shall be overthrown; but the tabernacle of the upright shall stand!"  
SOLOMON.

Died in this city, on Wednesday, the 7th instant, that paragon of pity, and nonpareil of fanaticism, yecept the *Antidote*; a thing engendered in the kennels of intolerance, and brought into existence in May, 1827. Its first breath twanged the trumpet of hostility to the advocates of religious freedom; and avowed its prostitution to the cause of priestcraft. From its birth it exhibited symptoms of a wretched constitution, though for a while it continued to tug the oar of controversy with a resolution that seemed to make amends for its want of sense and consistency. Say something it must, and it mattered little what with those who were prepared to receive whatever it might contain, however weak or absurd, for the utmost strength and clearness of argument. Aware of this, it bore lustily on, and weekly doled forth a pitiful rigmarole of nonsense, unequalled in the annals of inky warfare.

Justice, truth, free inquiry—all that could emancipate the mind from the shackles of priestcraft and its attendants, ignorance and superstition, were the objects of its deepest hatred and proscription. But that consummate weakness and abject servility to the *order*, were ill fitted to this region, where the people are fast breaking the clouds of religious despotism, that have so long obscured the way to truth and correct principles. It could only respire in the mephitic atmosphere of some benighted land, where the priesthood have succeeded in suppressing free inquiry, and keeping the mind of man in comparative infancy. But here, nothing could arrest it from its doom. The order, who had fondly hoped, by constant attention to keep up its vigor in spite of the most evident marks of incurable debility, were compelled to abandon it to its fate.

Its lingering and distressing death, excited the pity of those it had misrepresented and proscribed, while its former friends only paid it empty honors. In its last moments, an exiled priest cast a pitying eye on its expiring struggles, and muttered an infernal incantation for its resurrection in some more congenial region, where an enlightened people would not molest or make afraid.

But never, O mother Intolerance! never again attempt to rear your

miserable offspring this side of the Atlantic ! Nurture your monstrous brood in some remote corner, where the baneful influence of the priest still fetters the people in ignorance, superstition, and fanaticism ; for the clear light of our country is growing too powerful for their recreant eye. Let the distressful end of the Antidote—let its terrible spasms in the hour of dissolution alarm and terrify you ; and prevent your attempting again to raise any more of your progeny in this sacred sanctuary.

I. M

*Albany, May, 1828.*

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ADDRESS DELIVERED BY ROBERT OWEN

*At a public meeting of the inhabitants of New Harmony, on Sunday,  
April 13, 1828.*

[Concluded from page 269.]

I tried here a new course for which I was induced to hope that fifty years of political liberty had prepared the American population : that is, to govern themselves advantageously. I supplied land, houses, and the use of much capital ; and I tried, each in their own way, all the different parties who collected here ; but experience proved that the attempt was premature to unite a number of strangers not previously educated for the purpose, who should carry on extensive operations for their common interest and live together as a common family. I afterwards tried, before my last departure hence, what could be done by those who associated through their own choice, and in small numbers ; to these I gave leases of large tracts of land for ten thousand years upon a nominal rent, and for moral conditions only ; and these I did expect would have made a progress during my absence ; but now, upon my return, I find that the habits of the individual system were so powerful, that these leases have been, with a few exceptions, applied for individual purposes and individual gain ; and in consequence they must return again into my hands.

This last experience has made it evident that *families* trained in the individual system, founded as it is upon superstition, have not acquired those moral qualities of forbearance and charity for each other which are necessary to promote full confidence and harmony among all the members, and without which communities cannot exist. Communities, to prosper permanently, must consist of persons devoid of prejudice and possessed of moral feelings in unison with the laws of human nature.

All systems of religion train men to be prejudiced, to be without charity, and to be opposed to each other. With these qualities they never can unite as brethren of one family, having one interest and sincere kind feelings for each other.

But is the population of the world to be left in this miserable and hopeless state ? If *all* we desire cannot be effected for this generation, so as to produce honesty, industry, intelligence, independence and happiness, by reason of the habits and feelings that have arisen out of their superstitious training ; ought we to abandon them and their offspring to their errors and miseries ? Ought we not rather to redouble our exertions to stop that evil from proceeding any farther, and never be weary

in well doing? If we cannot do all now, let us do whatever is practicable; and make as great an advance towards the right road as we can make with the means we possess.

From all I have seen since I left you I am more than ever convinced of the necessity for the change from the individual to the social system; and through some difficulties with patience and perseverance unyielding, the present generation may yet obtain many of the benefits which their children may be prepared to enjoy in comparative perfection.

To effect this change, a course must be adopted different from what I originally intended. It was my wish not to engage again in any affairs of business, but to leave all pecuniary matters to the management of others, and to make arrangements to be always at liberty to go and spread the knowledge of the principles on which the Social System is founded, far and near, that vice and misery might upon an extensive scale be the more speedily reduced. I must, however, now make some modifications of my proceedings in consequence of many parties here, during my absence, having acted in opposition to my views, and to the principles of the Social System, instead of promoting them, as they were bound to do by their promises and engagements, and as I expected they would, because it was their interest to do so.

Some of you that remained here under the individual system have complained that during my absence a monopoly has existed in some departments, which has retarded your individual success; and the neighboring communities have also complained since my return that they have been injured by it. I fear there has been some foundation for these complaints, but it is probable that these statements have been exaggerated by the over-excited feelings of the suffering parties.

It is necessary, however, now to declare distinctly, that hereafter there may be no mistake upon a subject of so much interest, that it was never my intention to establish any injurious monopoly, nor to grant such monopoly to any one: And every individual has always been, as now, at full liberty to dispose of the produce of his own labor in any way he may choose.

But, on the other hand, it was no part of my plan, by the introduction of petty stores and whiskey shops, to encourage competition which produces as many evils as monopoly, and is equally contrary to the social system. The party permitted to sell foreign produce, promised on making the engagement for the premises in which the monopoly is said to have existed, that the business should be conducted, as it had been previously managed, as much for the benefit of the town as for the proprietors.

In these respects I have been disappointed, and the business through errors of judgment has been conducted, I fear, too often more with a view to pecuniary gain of the individual proprietors, than for the mutual benefit of the surrounding population.

[Robert Owen then adverted to other occurrences which took place in his absence; but, as these are of a more local nature, it appears unnecessary to detail them. He proceeded:]

Now as the foundation of all improvements in the condition of man-

kind must be founded on principles of strict justice and honesty of purpose, and as I wish to improve the condition of my fellow-creatures, I early made these my principles of conduct, from which I have never knowingly deviated in a single instance.

I lament that any such occurrences should have taken place ; had I anticipated any such, I would have adopted more restrictive measures.

They have however occurred, and what is now best to be done ? Shall I be angry and irritated with my fellow beings, because they have been ignorant of their real interests : with the principles which I deem so true and valuable for the promotion of virtue and happiness ; would this conduct be rational in me ? I can only feel regret instead of anger ; I will, if I can, turn these errors to the benefit of all. My time has been employed for this purpose, since my return. I have been collecting all the facts that may enable me to form a correct judgment of what is now best to be done. I have not yet obtained all the facts necessary for my purpose, and that is the reason why I have not sooner met you in public. I am still fully occupied in ascertaining what can be done under the existing circumstances to secure the great object which I came here to put into practice ; and I have reason to believe that arrangements may now be formed that will promote it ; that will prepare a solid foundation for the social system, and materially benefit all who honestly desire to support it. When these arrangements shall be fully determined upon, I will again meet you and explain them, in order that all shall understand what is intended to be done.

But this much is certain, that as far as my influence can extend there shall be no injurious monopoly here ; there shall be no attempt to take advantage of any one or to do any one an injustice. - These are common vulgar evils which ought not to exist, where an honest attempt is made to improve the condition of mankind.

My intention now is to form such arrangements on the estate of Harmony as will enable those who desire to promote the practice of the Social System to live in separate families on the individual system, and yet to unite their general labor or to exchange labor for labor, on the most beneficial terms for all ; or to do both or neither as their feelings or apparent interest may influence them. While other arrangements shall be formed to enable them to have their children trained from infancy in a knowledge of the principles of human nature and of the laws which govern it ; and in consequence trained in such improved habits, manners and disposition as will prepare them to adopt, with ease and pleasure, the co-operative and social system and to enjoy its innumerable advantages

By these measures I hope there will be brought around us, by degrees, an honest and industrious and also a well-educated population, with right feelings and views, who will earnestly endeavor to promote the happiness of each other and unite in bringing up their children as one family with simple manners, temperate habits, and useful knowledge, both in principles and practice.

Those who have a knowledge of human nature, who have been permitted to overcome the prejudices early forced into their minds, and who have a real affection for their fellow beings, will not be discouraged by any obstacles but will persevere to the end.

R. OWEN.



*Observance of Sunday.*—The following is the report of the proceedings at the trial, to which we alluded in our last:—

*Fourth and Sixth Wards Court—Thursday, May 15, 1828.*

Before Mr. Justice MORRILL.

Corporation of the city of New-York *vs.* Miles Chambers.

This case was brought by the corporation against the Defendant, for the infringement of certain ordinances, by exposing and selling articles of clothing on Sundays the 6th and 13th April last, by which he rendered himself liable to a penalty of five dollars for each offence.

By the constitution of this court, the jury, in cases under \$25, is composed of six, and the following gentlemen were accordingly sworn:

Calvin W. How, Moses Judah, Frederick Weed, Samuel Brown, Garritt Eoff, William P. Stuart.

Mr. Phenix opened the case for the prosecution. The suit was brought by the Corporation against Miles Chambers, to recover of him two several penalties for breaches of the ordinance, by which it is enacted "that no persons shall within the city of New-York, on the first day of the week, called Sunday, do any manner of servile work or labor, (works of necessity or charity excepted) or be aiding, assisting or consenting thereto; or buy, sell, or expose for sale any liquor, groceries, or *other things whatsoever*, excepting fish or milk, before nine o'clock in the morning, and milk after five o'clock in the afternoon; or shall hunt, shoot, fish, sport or play, &c. under the penalty of five dollars for each offence."

The Corporation were authorized to pass such a law, by an act of the sovereign legislature of the state of New-York, authorizing "the Mayor, Aldermen and Commonality of the City of New-York to make and pass such by-laws and ordinances as they shall from time to time deem necessary and proper, to regulate and prohibit the purchase, sale, or exposure to sale, of any goods, wares and merchandize, &c. on Sundays," &c.

There was no shadow of law to justify the defendant's proceedings. The enforcement of the present suit was sanctioned by decisions of the Supreme Court. The defendant persists in his conduct, and continues to defy the law. As moral and good men, having a regard for the general religious opinions of the country, and the authority of law, they could not sanction by their verdict the conduct of the defendant. Mr. Phenix then called

*Benjamin Fuller*, who deposed, that he knows the defendant, who lived in Cherry-street on the 6th and 13th April last. The defendant is a merchant tailor. Witness saw his store open on several Sundays, particularly on the 6th and 13th April—goods were exposed, as I suppose, for sale; saw no one purchase on those days.

*Cross-examined.*—The shop door was wide open; does not know for what object the door was open. Knows that the goods were exposed for sale from a subsequent declaration of defendant; does not know whether defendant's family lived there; defendant's clerk was behind the counter; clothes were hanging on each side of the door.

Here, the defendant's counsel, Mr. Fay, wished to infer, that because

church doors were open on Sundays, *sequitur*, that every other door might be open also.

Witness is an officer appointed by the Common Council; is street-inspector for the 7th ward, and has held that office for five years.

*William Jackson* swore, that on Sunday, the 13th April, he bought a pair of duck trowsers at defendant's store; it was open as I went along in Cherry-street. I went in and bought the trowsers.

*Cross-examined.*—I purchased the goods because I wanted them.—I bought on Sunday because it was convenient for me; I have to attend to my affairs during the week days.

*Stephen Ketchum* stated, that he lives at 84 Cherry-street, has seen the defendant selling clothing on Sundays; saw purchasers pay money.

*Cross-examined.*—I am not aware that it is necessary to sell on Sundays—knows of no case wherein there can be a necessity to vend articles on the Sabbath—does not know that clothiers are accustomed to keep their stores open on Sundays.

Mr. Phenix here rested the case for the prosecution, adding, that he thought the corporation dealt very mildly with the defendant. (A disposition to hiss, was here manifested by the by-standers.)

Mr. Fay for the defendant, denied that selling a pair of breeches on Sunday was breaking the laws of God. He stated that the prosecution originated in fanaticism and superstition—in an organized system to enslave the citizens of this free country, by subjecting them to the sway of a spiritual and intolerant tyranny. He declared the proceeding a breach of moral principle, and an unhingement of Reason. It was the duty of the defendant to sell clothes every day, because by so doing, he could best support a large family. In this, there was no violation of law; it was a work of *necessity*; and its prohibition was unconstitutional. The Corporation could not divest nature of its wants and necessities; it could not pretend to enact that a person should not want clothes on Sundays, or if he did, that he must walk naked till Monday. If a person lost his hat in a dock, might he not go to a hatter's, and furnish himself with a new one, even though the day was Sunday. The Corporation, and its Attorney, the Judges, Jury, and neighbors, were no judges of necessity; a person must be his own judge in such a contingency; on that plea, his client rested his defence. God gave man time, and he had a right to employ it as he pleased. If defendant was obliged to shut up on a Sunday, he was deprived of the means of subsistence. The defendant was persecuted because he chose to be industrious when gentlemen were idle, and certainly the defendant was the honestest of the two. The prohibitory ordinance was absurd and repugnant to common sense, consequently it was of no effect. There was nothing wicked in selling breeches; the bible might forbid it, but the defendant is no christian; he is a moral philosopher; and believes that all religions are false, fraudulent, dangerous and superstitious.

[A Juror here asked the court if he was obliged to have his ears shocked by such blasphemy.—Court. Yes, Sir.]

Mr. F. continued: There are two societies, and one press in New-York, for the propagation of liberal principles. The Free Press Association—The Society of Free Enquirers—and The *Correspondent*. It

was at these that the prosecution was aimed—it was of these that the fanatics were afraid. There is a formidable party in New-York, and in the United States, who call themselves an Evangelical party, and who want a Presbyterian Pope. The pulpits are filled with them—they hate these associations, because they fear them, and because these societies are pure—are intended for free discussion and to open the eyes of the multitude; the fanatics wish to ruin every person who is a member of them. Hence comes the prosecution of the defendant—But prosecution is in vain—the sacred principles of toleration, and the essence of liberty is involved in the present question. The Legislature and Corporation had no right to enact such laws—the law of nature is the law of man; and this corporation ordinance is opposed to the law of nature, and the constitution of the United States. The defendant came to this country to avoid tyrants, fanatics, and bigots. Mr. *Fay* then commenced reading a pamphlet, which he stated had been drawn up by a legal gentleman, now at the head of one of the monied institutions of this city, who formerly presided on the bench, and who had intended to give the substance of the work, as his charge to a jury in the event of a similar case having ever been brought before him.

The Court stated that this would be no authority—the Court could not listen to books—the Counsel might read it as his own opinion if he pleased, but not with the sanction of authority. They could listen to nothing here but adjudicated cases—the opinion of individuals not clothed with legal experience and authority were of no avail.

Mr. *Fay* proceeded to read the pamphlet in question. It is entitled “The People’s Rights Reclaimed: being An Exposition of the Unconstitutionality of the Law of the State of New-York, *Compelling the Observance of a Religious Sabbath Day.*”

Mr. *Fay* having read a few pages of this work, by which it appeared that the writer was a strenuous advocate of the rights of toleration, the Court again interposed, and declared that it could not listen to anonymous remarks—there was no coming to the main and simple subject of dispute by such a proceeding as the learned gentleman had adopted.

*Abraham Collins*, was then called on behalf of the defendant. Witness is a tailor; does not keep a shop now; but did formerly; always sold on Sundays; it is a custom; cannot say if it was necessary for the defendant to sell on Sunday; witness used to keep open until 12 at noon, and would have done so longer, only people would not come. Sunday is the best day for selling; most goods are sold on Sunday.

*Cross-examined.* Witness is a Jew; always keeps his Sabbath; shuts up once a week, on the day prescribed by his law; believes in his own religion.

Mr. *Phenix* then read to the Jury the law of the state, and the ordinance of the corporation cited above. Also, the second section of the act for the suppression of immorality. (Laws, vol. 2. 194.) and an extract from 8 Johnson, 290; being the opinion of Chancellor Kent in *The People vs. Ruggles*.

Mr. *Fay* said that the decisions of Chancellor Kent, when opposed to the spirit of the constitution, were worth nothing. The law, as laid down by Kent, was certainly the law of the land; but it is against the spirit of the constitution. The witness who bought, consulted his convenience—he bought because it suited him. The witness,

Collins, stated, that Sunday was the best day for selling; and it was a strong argument for the necessity of the case, that the defendant had a large family, and could not be expected to be idle on the day best adapted to his business.

Mr. Phenix said that it was a maxim, that the convenience of the minority must yield to that of the majority. The societies alluded to by the defendant's counsel were calculated to occasion breaches of the peace; and one individual had no right to shock even the prejudices of a whole community. He rejoiced that the defendant was a foreigner, and that it was a stranger who had the effrontery to declare his intention of endeavoring to subvert our laws. The Law of Moses, "keep holy the Sabbath," had been observed from time immemorial; and the attempt of the defendant was calculated, in its results, to disorganize society. It was revolting to the prevailing religious feelings of this moral country—but the charter of the "Free Press" would find itself controlled by the charter of the laws. The Common Council was authorized to pass the ordinance by the sovereign legislature. The gentleman defined acts of necessity as those acts, the refraining from which would be injurious and hurtful to our fellow creature, and as deeds of positive and imperious necessity. But the conduct of the defendant did not come within this exception. If a person is found naked in the street, the Police would take care of him. The gentleman did not appeal to the Jury as Christians, but as citizens, as men of morality, as guardians of the laws, and as fathers of families. His large family is no excuse for the defendant, but rather an argument against him—the welfare of his children should have taught him an observance of moral and religious sentiments. The *dictum* of Chancellor Kent, which the defendant's counsel disputed, was alike an honor to the head and heart of that excellent man, to his judgment and his piety.

Mr. Justice Morrill. The present action was brought to recover certain penalties for a breach of the ordinance of the Corporation. The point for the Jury's consideration was, did the defendant sell on the 6th and 13th of April last, which days were Sundays, and whether such selling was against law. The Legislature gave the Corporation power to enact laws for the better government of the city; and the Corporation undoubtedly is sanctioned by law in passing these regulations. The defendant raises two objections; firstly, that it is a work of necessity, and is excepted thereby from the penalty; this point it remained for the Jury to decide. The defendant's second objection was, that he is not bound to regard the Sabbath, and that he is exempt from the penalty as he must support his family. But there is no legal proof that is contrary to his conscience and belief. The defendant has not proved himself a Jew, who are alone freed from the obligation. The Government of the United States is the most liberal of all Governments; but principles of law must be maintained, and public morality protected. The common law of England, when not abrogated by positive enactment in this country, is the law of the land; and such being the case, the conduct of defendant was in direct violation of it. A person may profess whatever faith he pleases, but one day must be observed. The Christian keeps his Sunday, and the Jew his peculiar day, although the law cannot force individuals to go to places of worship.

The Jury returned a verdict for the plaintiffs—damages \$10.

We have placed the preceding report on record, that our readers may be apprized of the measures pursuing by the Evangelical cabal to subjugate this country to a puritanical despotism. Our limits prevent us from offering any remarks this week on the subject: but we shall not lose sight of it.

Meanwhile, we have to state, that at a public meeting held in the Bethel Academy on Sunday evening last, which was numerous and respectably attended, a resolution was unanimously adopted in favor of appealing to the Supreme Court against the above decision, and of petitioning the Legislature to repeal the law under which it was given. A Committee of Five was also appointed to superintend the proceedings, and to open and receive subscriptions to defray all necessary expenses.

*Free Press Association.*—The meetings of the Association are now held in the *Temple of Science*, (formerly the Bethel Academy) Elizabeth-Street, between Houston and Bleeker-streets. A *Scientific* lecture will be delivered on Sunday, (to-morrow) the 25th instant, at half past ten o'clock, forenoon; and a *Theological* lecture at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

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